opened subject to the fulfilment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources under annual plan activities.

IT for rural students

1193. SHRI S. NIRAIKULATHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to provide Information Technology to the rural students in order to develop the rural areas through knowledge data base etc.; and

(b) whether Government have any scheme for scholarship for the rural students who want to pursue studies in Advanced Communication and Information Technology?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN):

(a) and (b) The details are given below:—

1. Employment Generation Training Scheme (EGTS)

a. Objective of the Scheme:

Employment Generation Training Scheme (EGTS) was intiated by the Ministry of Information Technology (MIT) in 1997-98 for North East States. Subsequently, it was extended to other regions in the country for SCST/OBC candidates. The overall objective of this scheme is to harness the potential of Electronics and Information Technology in providing "Employment Oriented Training" for educated youth to fill up the shortage of trained personnel in the North East and other regions.

Courses Supported:

MIT support is provided to participating institutions for conducting any of the following courses:

1. DOEACC 'O' level course
2. DOEACC 'A' level course
3. Repair and Maintenance of Consumer Electronics Equipment
4. Repair and Maintenance of PC Hardware

22 No. of Institutions in rural India are being supported.

b. Under EGTS, there is a scheme for fee reimbursement assistance to the institutions who already have reasonable good infrastructure and are willing to take student fee reimbursement. Students who are meeting SC/ST/OBC and below poverty line are exempted from fee.

2.. Centre for Electronic Design Technology, India

a. The following steps have been taken by CEDTI to reach Information Technology to students in rural areas:—

- Mass Employment Generation Training Programme under Council for Science & Technology, (UP: Training in Solar Lantern & Power conditioning equipment—CEDTI, Gorakhpur.
- Skill-cum-technology upgradation programme for small scale industries—sponsored by SIDBI-CEDTI, Gorakhpur, Mohali.
- Training under Jayanti Shehri Rozgar Yojna in Computer Application software—Sponsored by Jammu Urban Development Agency (JUDA)-CEDTI, Jammu.
- Training to teachers of Blind School for using Braille printing equipment in Assam-CEDTI, Tezpur.
- Multimedia Centre for Enterepreneurship Development-CEDTI, Mohali
- Setting up of CEDTI Centre at Aizwal, Mizoram

(b) Courses at CEDTI Centres provide the following benefits to the underpriviledge:—

I. SC & ST students—25% fee concession

II. Physically handicapped—25% fee cencession

3. Samadhan Kendra

a. A project for Village Information Centre (Samadhan Kendra) was initiated in 1997-98 by DIT to bring IT intervention in Rural India. Under the project a Village Information Centre was set up in

Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nadu after extensive study of the demography, crops, animal husbandry and other related issues of the region. The samadhan kendra is also being used to impart vocational training on computers to rural students of the area. A number of packages to satisfy the information needs of the rural people were developed. The Samadhan Kendra is currently in operation and is being used extensively. The project is implemented by an NGO Centre for Ecology Research and Development (CERD), Pondicherry. The total cost is Rs. 15.48 lacs. The Samadhan Kendra is being run as a cost centre by CERD, Pondicherry after completion of project in 2001.

(b) Since the centre is run as the cost centre, no scholarship or fee reimbursement is being provided by the NGO.

Irregularities in Telephone Department

† 1194. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item under the caption, "Adhunikikaran ke naam par telephone vibhag mein kroron ki loot" published in Patna issue of "Dainik Jagran" dated the 19th May, 2001;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted many investigations into the large scale irregularities in laying of cables and scams in purchase of materials without inviting tenders;

(c) if so, the action taken against the guilty officers; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAP AN SIKDAR): (a) to (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

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† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.